

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

DETAILED ACTION

Specification

3. The specification on page 2 has been amended to remove the Examiner's objection.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 112

- 4-7. Claims 25 and 26 have been amended to comply with the requirements of 35 USC 112.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 102

- 8, 9. Claim 25 is rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Leonard (US Patent No. 4,574,971). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Amended Claim 25 reads:

25. A method for repairing fuel tanks which comprises providing a fuel tank having a surface with a detected leak, providing a patch or plug having a surface to be attached to the fuel tank surface with a detected leak, the patch or plug comprising a multilayer laminate structure having one or more layers of a low energy surface material and one or more layers of a polymer having fuel barrier property, coating the tank surface and/or the patch or plug surface with an adhesive, placing the patch or plug over the detected leak such that the adhesive is sandwiched between the patch or plug surface and the tank surface, pressing the patch or plug against the tank and allowing the adhesive to cure to bond together the patch or plug surface and the tank surface.

Leonard (US Patent No. 4,574,971) discloses sealing devices for stopping leaks in tanks. Leonard does not disclose a patch or plug comprising a multilayer laminate structure having one or more layers of a low energy surface material and one or more layers of a polymer having fuel barrier property, as required in amended Claim 25. Thus, Applicants submit that Leonard (US Patent No. 4,574,971) does not anticipate amended Claim 25.

10. Claims 25 and 26 are rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as being anticipated by Smith et al. (US Patent 5,166,007). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

Smith et al. (USP 5,166,007) discloses a multilayered patch containing a plurality of prepreg layers (col. 3, lines 35-36). The patch comprises a photocurable resin-impregnated (prepreg) fabric having a non-radiation blocking transparent film covering the fabric and an optional radiation blocking layer over the film (column 3, lines 13-16). Smith does not disclose a patch or plug comprising a multilayer laminate structure having one or more layers of a low energy surface material and one or more layers of a polymer having fuel barrier property, as required in amended Claim 25. Thus, Applicants submit that Smith et al. does not anticipate amended Claim 25.

Claim 26 limits the patch recited in Claim 25 to one made of a multilayer plastic laminate. On the other hand, the patch disclosed by Smith et al. is made of a multilayer prepreg fabric, which is not a multilayer plastic laminate, as discussed in Paragraph 13 below.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Smith et al. (USP 5,166,007) does not anticipate amended Claim 25 and Claims 26 to 45 dependent therefrom.

Claim Rejections – 35 USC 103

12. The Examiner's presumption that the subject matter of the various claims was commonly owned at the time any inventions covered therein were made, is correct.

13. Claim 26 is rejected under 35 USC 103(a) as being unpatentable over Leonard (US Patent No. 4,574,971) as set forth above for Claim 25 and further in view of Smith et al. (USP 5,166,007). This rejection is respectfully traversed for the following reasons.

The Office Action states that Smith discloses a method of repairing tanks where the patch material is of a multilayered plastic laminate (column 3, lines 35-40). This statement is not accurate. Column 3, lines 35-40 describes a multilayered patch containing a plurality of prepreg layers. (Underlining added for emphasis.) The patch

contains only one layer of plastic film (film 21). The prepreg layers comprise a photo-curable resin-impregnated fabric.

The fabric is not a plastic film. Smith describes in Column 1, lines 53-60 that the term "fabric" is intended to include a knitted cloth, for example, plain jersey knit, interlock, ribbed, cross float jersey knit or weft knit, and the like, or woven into a fabric, for example of plain weave, satin weave, twill weave, basket weave, and the like.

In addition, Smith does not disclose or suggest a patch or plug comprising a multilayer laminate structure having one or more layers of a low energy surface material and one or more layers of a polymer having fuel barrier property, as set forth above for Claim 25.

In view of the above, Applicants submit that Claim 26 is patentable over Leonard (US Patent No. 4,574,971) as set forth above for Claim 25 and further in view of Smith et al. (USP 5,166,007).

Conclusion

In view of the above amendments and remarks, the claims are now considered to be in condition for allowance and a Notice of Allowance of Claims 25 to 45 is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,


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